



Distr.: General
31 July 2025

Original: English
English and French Only

African Ministerial Conference on the Environment Twentieth Session

Ministerial Segment
Nairobi, Kenya 16 and 17 July
2025

Decision AMCEN/20/Dec.1: Omnibus Decision on integrated environmental governance and strategic cooperation in Africa

We, African Ministers for the Environment,

Having met in Nairobi on 16 and 17 July 2025 at the twentieth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Recalling the outcomes of the nineteenth ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment held in Addis Ababa on 17 and 18 August 2023,

Recalling the outcomes of the resumed eighteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment held in Dakar on 15 and 16 September 2022,

Recognising the crucial need to take action for environmental sustainability and prosperity in Africa in order to find common solutions including science-based solutions to the environmental challenges the continent faces,

Determined to advance an action-oriented approach that addresses implementation gaps and takes advantage of the opportunities presented in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, its Sustainable Development Goals, and Agenda 2063 of the African Union.

Decide:

Decision AMCEN/20/Dec.1(a): Advancing sustainable soil health for nature and resilient food systems in Africa

Recognising the importance of soil for the survival of human beings, as the foundation of food security, and for protecting the environment and its resources,

Recalling decision AMCEN 18/1(a) on fostering sustainable soil governance in Africa, which emphasised the need for integrated approaches to address desertification, land degradation, drought, climate change, biodiversity loss and unsustainable food systems, and unhealthy foods,

Recalling the Maputo Declaration on Agriculture and Food Security in Africa (Assembly/AU/Decl.7(II)), in which African Heads of State and Government committed to allocate at least 10 percent of national budgetary resources to agriculture and rural development within five years and to adopt the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture

Development Programme framework, comprising four pillars, including “sustainable land and water management,” which encompasses integrated soil fertility management to conserve and enhance soil health,

Further recalling the Malabo Declaration on Accelerated Agricultural Growth and Transformation for Shared Prosperity and Improved Livelihoods (Assembly/AU/Decl.1(XXIII), June 2014), which set ambitious targets, including ending hunger by 2025, thereby underscoring the critical role of soil health and conservation in boosting agricultural productivity and resilience,

Noting the critical findings of the assessment report of soil governance in Africa, which underscored the fragmented policy landscapes, weak institutional coordination, and limited investment in sustainable soil management across the continent,

Acknowledging the need for an integrated regional approach that promotes sustainable soil management across key sectors such as agriculture, mining, urbanisation, forestry, and industrialisation,

Welcoming the recommendation for the development of a model law on soil governance and the growing momentum to elevate soil protection as a priority.

Decide:

1. To request the United Nations Environment Programme in collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the African Union Commission, Regional Economic Communities, and development partners to develop guidelines for a soil governance legal framework in Africa, including a regional sustainable soil management model legal, institutional and policy for guide national and regional actions.
2. To call upon member States to prioritise sustainable soil management within national policies, legal systems, and development plans, in alignment with inter alia their nationally determined contributions, national adaptation plans, and national biodiversity strategies and action plans and to integrate soil considerations in environmental impact assessments, environment and social strategic assessments, zoning mechanisms, and investment appraisals.
3. To encourage member States to enhance soil health through establishment or strengthening of national soil information and data systems and support for soil research and innovation; development of laws to protect soil as a distinct natural resource and ecosystem; promotion of nature-positive agricultural practices, including cover cropping, minimal tillage, organic fertilisers, and diversified cropping systems.
4. To request Member States to enhance institutional coordination for sustainable soil management including by designating national lead agencies or focal points and fostering collaboration across ministries, departments, agencies, research bodies, and local authorities.
5. To urge member States to enhance public awareness and build technical expertise and capacity to foster a culture of soil stewardship, using the whole of society approach.
6. To urge member States to integrate soil health indicators into national monitoring frameworks for sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience, and pollution control in alignment with global environment commitments.

Decision AMCEN/20/Dec.1(b): Enhancing collaboration between ministers responsible for environment and ministers responsible for finance, planning and economic development

Recognising that environment and climate considerations are integral to Africa's socio-economic development and that closer collaboration between African ministers of environment and those of finance, planning and economic development can unlock new resources and opportunities for green growth in Africa to accelerate progress towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and African Union Agenda 2063,

Recalling Decision AMCEN/18/1(e) and the Addis Ababa Declaration of the nineteenth session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment which called for strengthened partnerships between the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the Conference of African Ministers of Finance and Planning, and joint action on climate finance, sustainable budgeting and green investments,

Acknowledging with appreciation, the outcomes of the fifty-seventh session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development, held in Addis Ababa on 17 and 18 March 2025, the outcome of the eleventh session of Africa Regional Forum on Sustainable Development which further recognised the critical role of environmental sustainability in driving green industrialisation, mobilising climate finance and safeguarding Africa's natural resources while building resilient economies and securing a sustainable future for the continent,

Further acknowledging the joint meetings, policy dialogues and shared programmes of work and areas for joint work including sustainable budgeting frameworks and carbon market initiatives convened by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa and other partners that have identified practical modalities for collaboration between the environment, finance and economic development sectors,

Emphasising that improving national and continental capacity to mobilise and effectively use financial resources is essential for implementing the Africa Ministerial Conference on the Environment decisions and advancing the environmental, economic and social dimensions of Africa's development agenda,

Decide:

1. To convene, with the support of the United Nations Environment Programme and United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, a joint ministerial session of the Africa Ministerial Conference of the Environment and the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in 2027 in order to explore innovative policy directions and actions to accelerate socio-economic and environmental development, mobilise climate and green finance, and promote sustainable economic growth in Africa.
2. To establish a formal collaboration mechanism composed of periodic joint meetings and working groups between the Africa Ministerial Conference of the Environment and the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development aimed at integrating environmental priorities into national budgets and economic planning and aligning fiscal policies with climate and sustainable development objectives.
3. To request the President and the Bureau of the Africa Ministerial Conference of the Environment in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and the African Union Commission and other partners, to engage with the Bureau of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development in order to implement this collaborative mechanism and follow up on agreed actions.
4. To urge Member States to develop and apply incentives and innovative financing mechanisms including public and private green investment instruments to increase domestic fiscal and non-fiscal resource mobilisation for environment and climate action, in accordance with Agenda 2063 of the Africa Union, the 2015 Addis Ababa Action Agenda for financing the Sustainable Development Goals, nationally determined contributions and national adaptation plans.

5. To request the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa to develop a common framework on sustainable budgeting for nature-based solutions in Africa to ensure coherent implementation of environmental and climate priorities across budgeting processes.
6. To encourage member States to develop high-integrity carbon market mechanisms and other innovative financial instruments, in line with common African positions on carbon pricing, and support capacity-building for carbon accounting and climate project funding, so as to mobilise investments and finance climate mitigation and adaptation in Africa.

Decision AMCEN/20/Dec.1(c): Synergies among multilateral environmental agreements

Recalling the UNEP/EA6/res.4 related to the promotion of synergies, cooperation or collaboration for national implementation of MEAs and other relevant environmental instruments,

Recognising the importance of a multilateral environment agreements day for the first time at the sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly dedicated to strengthening cooperation within the agreements and enhancing their visibility,

Recalling decision AMCEN/SS.X/1 underscoring the interlinkages between drought, land degradation and desertification, biodiversity conservation and climate change, and the need to increase synergies and complementarities among the three Rio conventions and other multilateral environmental agreements to achieve mutual social, economic and environmental co-benefits for member States,

Acknowledging that despite decades of implementation of multilateral environment agreements, there remains gaps in coordination, coherence, integrated data collection and unified reporting frameworks, to translate high-level commitments into national and regional actions,

Cognisant of the challenges faced by member States in ratification and implementation of multilateral environment agreements,

Desirous to address the development challenges faced by Africa, especially biodiversity loss, climate change, pollution, land degradation, desertification and drought,

Recognising the importance of implementation of regional and global multilateral environment agreements,

Noting the efforts of the various Africa Group of Negotiators in advancing the interest and priorities of the continent,

Pursuant to the knowledge exchange of the Bureaux of the Africa Group of Negotiators facilitated by the African Union Commission,

Decide:

1. To request the Secretariat with the support of the Africa Union Commission to strengthen coordination among the various Africa groups of negotiators to foster synergies and integrated approaches for global and continental negotiations and implementation of regional and global multilateral environmental agreements.
2. To request the African Union Commission to develop a programme for enhanced capacity and governance on implementation of multilateral environment agreements at continental and regional levels.
3. To promote collaboration between member States and the private sector in supporting the implementation of regional and global multilateral environment agreements.
4. To request African Union Development Agency-NEPAD, United Nations Environment Programme, United Nations Economic Commission of Africa, and multilateral financial institutions to provide technical and financial support to this process.

Decision AMCEN/20/Dec.1(d): Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution

Recalling resolution UNEP/EA 5/8 on establishment of a science-policy panel to contribute further to the sound management of chemicals and waste and to prevent pollution,

Also recalling that, as outlined in the Environment Assembly resolution, the panel is intended to support countries in implementing multilateral environmental agreements and other relevant international frameworks by offering scientific advice that informs policy, promotes the effective management of chemicals and waste, and addresses pollution challenges,

Emphasising that Africa Union Agenda 2063 aims to reduce the negative impacts of chemicals, waste, and pollution on human health and the environment by, among others, minimizing chemical risks, promoting sustainable practices, strengthening regulatory frameworks, capacity building, and addressing illegal trade,

Recognising that the full extent and impact of unsafe chemicals, waste and pollution on human health, biodiversity and ecosystem degradation as well as estimates of their release into the environment, remain unclear due to gaps in data and peer reviewed information as well as the rapid pace of development in an increasingly globalized world,

Emphasising that Africa is disproportionately affected by the negative impact of unsafe chemicals, waste and pollution, and that data availability in Africa is often limited and of low quality, largely due to a range of factors including insufficient financial resources, weak capacity and inadequate infrastructure to support limited resources, and other contributing challenges,

Further emphasising that preventing pollution and ensuring sound management of chemicals and waste continues to be top priorities for Africa, and that the creation of the science policy panel marks a critical step in bolstering joint efforts towards effectively tackling these challenges and promoting sustainable development and environmental resilience in the region.

Decides

1. To welcome the establishment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste, and Pollution Prevention.
2. To request the Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme, subject to the availability of funds, to convene the first meeting of the panel at the United Nations Environment Programme Headquarters at the earliest possible opportunity but not later than June 2026 as per the decision on the interim arrangements.
3. To request that the Secretariat of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution be based at the United Nations Environment Programme Headquarters, in line with paragraph 88 sub-paragraph 'k' of the future we want outcome document of the Rio+ 20, which among others, decided to progressively consolidate United Nations Environment Programme headquarter functions in Nairobi.
4. To request all member States to support the implementation of this decision.

Decision AMCEN/20/Dec.1(e): Strengthening the rules of procedure of the Africa Ministerial Conference of the Environment

Recalling the first session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in 1985 where the rules of procedure and the seventh session in 1997 where the Constitution were adopted,

Recognising that clear, effective rules of procedure are essential for the governance and continuity of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment,

Acknowledging that, in accordance with article 35 of the Constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment, the depository of the Constitution is the United Nations Environment Programme,

Recalling previous sessions of the Conference, that is, the eighth, ninth, tenth, eleventh, twelfth, thirteenth and eighteenth sessions, where decisions were adopted to revise the Constitution of the Conference so as to forge cooperative links between the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the African Union structures and to harmonise the relations with the United Nations Environment Programme,

Further recalling Decision AMCEN 18/1(f) which requested the review of the rules of procedure in line with the Constitution of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and a report on the recommendations submitted to the Conference,

Recalling the Addis Ababa Declaration on Seizing Opportunities and Enhancing Collaboration to Address Environmental Challenges in Africa, at the nineteenth session of the Conference that urged the Secretariat to expedite the review process and report to the twentieth session.

Decide:

1. To take note of the Secretariat's review report on the Rules of Procedure,
2. To express appreciation to the Secretariat for conducting the review of the Rules of Procedure and for submitting recommendations to the twentieth session for further consideration by member States.
3. To maintain the existing Rules of Procedure as currently drafted until such time as the Conference may amend them.
4. To reaffirm the adequacy of the Rules of Procedure while acknowledging the need for further revision.
5. To request the Secretariat to consult member States prior to the next ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in order to further identify areas that may require revision by its next session.

Decision AMCEN/20/Dec.1(f): Date and venue for the twenty-first session of the Africa Ministerial Conference of the Environment

Recalling that the first session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment where the Conference decided to meet once every two years,

Recognising the importance of ensuring sufficient preparation time and broad participation for each session of the Conference,

Emphasising that the twenty-first session should be scheduled in a timely manner and at a location that supports maximum attendance and impact, taking into account the African Union calendar and relevant global environmental meetings and events,

Recalling the eighteenth resumed session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment that decided that a joint session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development should be convened to forge innovative policy directions and actions to accelerate socioeconomic and environmental development, green investments, and the mobilization of climate finance on the continent,

Further recalling the fifty-fifth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development, the Conference of Ministers committed to collaborating with the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment in forging collective efforts and actions to accelerate socioeconomic and environmental development and green investments in Africa, and the mobilization of climate finance,

Welcoming the outcomes of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning and Economic Development on its work during the fifty-seventh session of the Economic Commission for Africa,

Decide:

1. To convene the twenty-first ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment serving as a joint session with the fifty eighth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development.
2. To convene the twenty-first ordinary session of the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment at a date and venue to be determined by the Bureau in consultation with the Bureau of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance Planning and Economic Development as a joint session.
3. To request the Bureau, in consultation with the Secretariat, to finalise and communicate to the member States the date, venue and draft provisional agenda of the twenty-first session in a timely manner.
4. To urge Member States to make necessary logistical and financial preparations, and to ensure the active participation at the twenty-first session of the Conference.

UNEDITED